



Iowa Department of Human Services

Terry E. Branstad
Governor

Kim Reynolds
Lt. Governor

Charles M. Palmer
Director

INFORMATIONAL LETTER NO. 1048

DATE: September 2, 2011

TO: Iowa Medicaid Physicians, Maternal Health Centers and Certified Nurse Midwife Providers

ISSUED BY: Iowa Department of Human Services, Iowa Medicaid Enterprise (IME)

RE: Smoking Cessation Coverage Available to Medicaid Members

As you know, women who smoke during pregnancy are at increased risk of having a low birth weight baby or of delivering a baby early (preterm delivery). Low birth weight babies and those born prematurely are at increased risk for infant mortality, illness and postnatal complications such as feeding problems, poor weight gain, and future learning problems.

Medicaid coverage for smoking cessation has been linked to higher smoking quit rates. Medicaid in Iowa generally covers smoking cessation medication for Medicaid members such as nicotine replacement therapy and oral smoking cessation therapy including varenicline (Chantix™) and bupropion SR. These medications require prior authorization (PA). PA questions may be directed to the Pharmacy Provider PA Hotline at 515-256-4607 (local) or 877-776-1567.

While smoking continues to see a steady decline nationally and in Iowa, it remains a persistent problem: roughly 1/3 of all pregnant women age 18-29 covered by Iowa Medicaid reported smoking during the pregnancy. Each prenatal care visit provides a critical opportunity to ask women about their tobacco use, and to advise and refer them to smoking cessation resources such as:

- **Quitline** is an important resource to assist pregnant women and others to quit smoking: 1- 800 - QUIT- NOW (1-800-784-8669) or www.quitlineiowa.org.
- **QuitNet** is the world's largest and most comprehensive online quit-smoking service, offering tools and support to help people quit and remain smoke free: www.quitnet.com.

Text4Baby is also a nice resource that offers new moms-to-be free health tips and weekly messages through texts. Text BABY to 511411 (Envia BEBE al 511411 para Español) or sign up at <http://text4baby.org/>.

Support is available to providers as well. Research has pointed to the success of motivational interviewing techniques for providers to assist patients in examining their own motivations and to think about quitting. Many resources are available on this technique

including one at <http://hcproviders.learnpublichealth.com>, which is offered free through the Iowa Department of Public Health.

We appreciate your partnership and commitment to healthy babies in Iowa! If you have any questions please contact the IME Provider Services Unit at 1-800-338-7909, locally in Des Moines at 515-256-4609 or email at imeproviderservices@dhs.state.ia.us.